

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 001561

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R, R/MR, I/RW, I/REC; PA, SA/PPD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: Nepal insurgency

1. "On deaf ears"

Editorial in the centrist "Kathmandu Post" (E/D, 8/6): "Voices raised against gruesome Maoist brutalities have fallen on deaf ears. The Maoist high command that is prompt in responding to anything concerning their ideology and general activities take refuge to their underground status whenever questions over their credibility and motives arise. At least the Maoist leadership, if not the grassroots cadres, should know that they are accountable to the people. The people want to know why the Maoists are intensifying their barbaric acts; why they are resorting to the law of jungle in taking action against anyone who they think opposes their ideas and why the Maoist insurgency revolves around brutal killings and inhumane activity. If the insurgents consider themselves a political entity, and if they don't like to be called terrorists, the high command should respond to the people's outcry-immediately... If the Maoists believe in diversity of ideas and existence of multiparty democracy, the free press should not have been tampered with. But the comrades have forced two journalists from Dailekh to leave the district. The only crime they committed was they were trying to report how much money the rebels were extorting from local businessmen. Whether these activities are taking place with the knowledge of the high command or not". matters a lot to assess the direction and credibility of the Maoist Movement. The silence of the high command means acknowledgement of the cadres' heinous activity. Which also means they do not recognize the rights of the people who do not side with them. In such a case, people may resort to keeping weapons for personal security-an act that could ignite a full-blown civil war in the country."

We join the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ)-the apex body of the associations of journalists-Amnesty International, and all human rights organizations in protesting against the barbaric behavior of the Maoists, and the cowardly act of snatching pens from journalists. Despite being aware that our voice in all likelihood will once again fall on deaf ears, we condemn all forms of inhumane acts by the Maoist rebels, and urge the Maoist leadership to stop their atrocities immediately. If the Maoists continue to defy the people's call, the media, as FNJ has also mentioned, will have to seriously consider their stance on the Maoist insurgency."

2. "Wrong signals"

Editorial in the pro-India "Himalayan Time" (E/D, 8/6): "Amnesty International (AI) has asked Maoist leader Prachanda to halt abductions of civilians immediately and release the abductees without conditions, and also to help minimize the impact of the armed conflict on children. AI has expressed concern over recent serious human rights violations, including those against human rights defenders and journalists. In another serious development, the Maoists have threatened to close down more than a dozen companies from August 17 in the three districts of the Kathmandu Valley and outside."

"This is not the first time AI has made such an appeal but it is as valid today as it was yesterday. There is no doubt that efforts should be continued to find a peaceful settlement of the civil war but there is no less need to protect the innocent from the ravages of the conflict. International conventions and rules should guide the warring sides. If due processes are bypassed, then the law of the jungle prevails. In a similar manner, the ultimatum to close down the companies in question tends to ignore the laws, rules and regulations and dispute resolution procedures."

"Under any system, including that preferred by the Maoists themselves, there need to be factories and investment. Without these, workers would have no jobs. If the threatened factories are shut down, thousands of workers will lose their jobs. Summary justice cannot build a civilized society. Negotiations are the best means of settling disputes. While the trade unions should recognize the limits of management, the latter

should also take into account the legitimate interests of the workers, including the implementation of the lawful provisions. Profit maximization may be a major objective of any entrepreneur, but a fair share of profit should go to the workers and employees as well. Economic units should not be made the playground of politics."

13. "The writing on the wall"

Editorial in centrist "Nepali Times" (E/D, 8/6): Eight-and-half years, and this is what the Maoist war has done to this country. It has created the conditions for a return to absolute monarchy, militarized the kingdom to a level not seen since the Anglo-Nepal wars 200 years ago, brutalized society with ruthless cruelty and snatched away from the people the civil liberties they secured in 1990.

And who benefits from this mad war? A few arms merchants and their clients in Kathmandu, plus a handful of hardline comrades spellbound by a discredited ideology. But the conflict does provide an opportunity for us to reform the structural problems in this society: the top-heavy military-monarchy combine, genuine devolution, redistribution of opportunity and restoring the people's right to electoral representation."

"The people want the middle way. There is a lesson in this week's internet poll (www.nepalitimes.com) for the Maoists: at press time, nearly a quarter of the respondents were saying they would vote for the CPN-(Maoist) party if it renounced violence and took part in elections. What are you waiting for, comrades?"

MORIARTY